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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/163, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of that resolution. The report, which covers the period from September 2016 to August 2017, contains information on the activities undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to establish and strengthen national human rights institutions, support provided by the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to national human rights institutions, cooperation between those institutions and the international human rights system and support provided by OHCHR to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and relevant regional networks.

* A/72/150.

** All references to Kosovo in the present report, whether to the territory, institutions or population, are to be construed in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 28 of General Assembly resolution 70/163, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The report outlines activities implemented since the last report of the Secretary-General to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/33/33) and covers the period from September 2016 to August 2017.

3. In resolution 70/163, the General Assembly recalled the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993, which reaffirmed the important and constructive role played by national human rights institutions, in particular in their advisory capacity to the competent authorities and in their role in preventing and remedying human rights violations, in disseminating information on human rights and in education in human rights.

4. In practice, many national human rights institutions play an important role in preventing conflicts and in early warning, including through monitoring serious human rights violations. In addition, many are engaged in ensuring that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is human-rights based.

5. The General Assembly also recognized the important role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in assisting the development of independent and effective national human rights institutions, guided by the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). The Assembly encouraged all United Nations human rights mechanisms and relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to work with Member States and national institutions to develop projects in the area of good governance and the rule of law, and in that regard welcomed the efforts made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop partnerships in support of national institutions, including the tripartite partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), OHCHR and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.

6. In paragraph 11 of resolution 70/163, the General Assembly stressed that national human rights institutions and their respective members and staff should not face any form of reprisal or intimidation, including political pressure, physical intimidation, harassment or unjustifiable budgetary limitations, as a result of activities undertaken in accordance with their mandates, including when taking up individual cases or when reporting on serious or systematic human rights violations. In that regard, in resolution 70/163 the Assembly also called upon States to promptly and thoroughly investigate cases of alleged reprisal or intimidation against members or staff of national human rights institutions or against individuals who cooperate or seek to cooperate with them.

7. The General Assembly urged the Secretary-General to continue to give high priority to requests from Member States for assistance in the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions.

II. Support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to national human rights institutions

A. Advisory services

8. The National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section is the focal point within OHCHR for the coordination of the activities to establish and/or strengthen national human rights institutions. Together with OHCHR field presences, other United Nations entities, in particular UNDP, and regional networks of national human rights institutions, OHCHR assists Governments in the establishment of national human rights institutions and/or contributes to building the capacity of such institutions. In that context, OHCHR works closely with regional intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

9. OHCHR provides national human rights institutions and other stakeholders with technical and legal assistance, in particular regarding constitutional and legislative frameworks relating to the establishment, nature, functions, powers and responsibilities of institutions. It also conducts and supports comparative analysis, technical cooperation projects, needs assessments and evaluation missions to establish and strengthen the capacity of national human rights institutions to discharge their mandate effectively.

10. During the period under review, OHCHR provided advice and/or assistance on the strengthening of human rights institutions in Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, the Comoros, the Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Oman, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe, Kosovo and the State of Palestine.

11. OHCHR also provided assistance to activities aimed at the establishment of national human rights institutions in the Bahamas, Benin, Botswana, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, the Gambia, Guinea, Iceland, Jamaica, Kuwait, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, South Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates and Vanuatu.

12. In some cases, this assistance was provided jointly with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other partners.

1. Africa

13. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for Central, East, Southern and West Africa, the OHCHR country offices in Burundi, Guinea and Uganda, the human rights advisers to the United Nations country teams in Chad, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda and Sierra Leone and the human rights components of the United Nations missions in the

Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan (in Darfur) continued, in consultation with the OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section, to provide advice on and assistance in the establishment and/or strengthening of national human rights institutions.

Legislative advice

14. During the period under review, OHCHR provided advice on the draft law for the establishment of national human rights institutions in the Gambia, Seychelles and Swaziland.

Capacity-building

15. In Burundi, OHCHR provided support and assistance to the National Independent Human Rights Commission to establish regional offices, recruit staff members and purchase equipment.

16. In Guinea, OHCHR provided advice to the National Human Rights Commission on drafting its annual report for 2016. In May 2017, it conducted training for the Commissioners on human rights monitoring, reporting and transitional justice.

17. In Kenya, since November 2016 OHCHR and UNDP have been providing support to the National Commission on Human Rights for the deployment of human rights monitors for the electoral process. OHCHR organized three specialized training sessions on human rights monitoring in the context of elections. It also trained the staff on the development and use of Sustainable Development Goal indicators and related data disaggregation and measurement.

18. In Liberia, in November 2016 OHCHR organized training sessions for the staff of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights on database management and human rights monitoring. In March 2017, it supported the development of a complaints handling database and provided expertise for the development of a five-year strategic plan.

19. In Madagascar, in October 2016 OHCHR provided technical support for budget drafting to the Independent National Human Rights Commission. It also organized eight capacity-building workshops for the Commission on the promotion and protection of human rights.

20. In May 2017, OHCHR, the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and UNDP co-organized a workshop on the Paris Principles for the South Sudan Human Rights Commission. OHCHR supported the participation of two resource persons from the national human rights institution of Zimbabwe and of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions in the workshop.

21. Between November 2016 and March 2017, OHCHR and UNDP supported the engagement of the Uganda Human Rights Commission with international human rights mechanisms, including the universal periodic review and special procedures. OHCHR also continued to support the Commission in developing a database to take stock of the recommendations of international and regional human rights mechanisms.

2. Americas and the Caribbean

22. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for South America and for Central America, the country offices in Bolivia (Plurinational State

of), Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, the human rights advisers to the United Nations country teams in Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Paraguay and the human rights component of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti continued to provide advice on and assistance in strengthening national human rights institutions, in consultation with the OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

Legislative advice

23. OHCHR provided legislative and technical advice to Jamaica and Saint Kitts and Nevis aimed at the establishment of national human rights institutions in line with the Paris Principles.

Capacity-building

24. In June 2017, OHCHR provided technical and substantive support to the Office of the Ombudsman of Costa Rica to hold a webinar between leading lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) groups and the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

25. In Guatemala, OHCHR has monitored the selection process of the new Counsel for Human Rights since April 2017 and has provided technical assistance for the development of a new set of selection criteria. OHCHR also strengthened the capacity of the Office of the Counsel to receive, analyse and document cases of human rights violations.

26. In Haiti, OHCHR provided support to the Office of the Ombudsman to establish two regional offices. It also supported the participation of the Ombudsman and the Director of the Protection Unit in the universal periodic review of Haiti in November 2016 and in the annual meeting of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in March 2017.

27. In Honduras, OHCHR and UNDP conducted a capacity assessment of the National Commission for Human Rights. In February and April 2017, OHCHR organized training sessions for the Commission on the rights of indigenous peoples and a human rights-based approach to development. Also in April 2017, OHCHR and UNDP facilitated a strategic planning workshop to support the inclusive drafting of an institutional capacity development plan with concrete results and indicators to implement recommendations.

28. In April 2017, OHCHR provided support to the Office of the Ombudsman of Panama for the organization of a seminar on the protection of human rights defenders.

3. Asia and the Pacific

29. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for South-East Asia and for the Pacific, the human rights advisers to the United Nations country teams in Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste and the human rights component of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continued to provide advice and assistance for the establishment or strengthening of national human rights institutions, in consultation with the OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

Legislative advice

30. During the period under review, OHCHR provided legislative and technical advice to the national human rights institutions of Fiji, India and Indonesia.

31. OHCHR also provided legislative and technical advice to Nauru and Vanuatu for the establishment of a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles.

Capacity-building

32. In September 2016, OHCHR provided technical support to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission to increase its database security to protect sensitive information. OHCHR also supported the establishment of an advocacy committee (composed of members of the Commission, the UNAMA Human Rights Unit (which is part of OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Program) to combat sexual slavery of boys (*bacha bazi*).

33. In October 2016, in Timor-Leste, OHCHR conducted training sessions for the Office of the Ombudsman on the universal periodic review. In November 2016, it organized a training session on human rights monitoring and implementation of good governance principles during the election process. OHCHR also provided support to the Ombudsman to conduct human rights training sessions for police officers and a comprehensive human rights capacity-building programme for the army.

4. Europe and Central Asia

34. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for Europe and for Central Asia, the human rights advisers for the South Caucasus, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Serbia, the Human Rights Office in the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, the joint OHCHR-Russian Federation project, the team in the Republic of Moldova led by a national human rights officer, as well as the human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine, continued to provide advice and assistance for the establishment and/or strengthening of human rights institutions, in consultation with the OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

Legislative advice

35. In March 2017, OHCHR and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) provided advice to the Ombudsman of Bulgaria to amend the enabling law of the human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles.

36. In January 2017, OHCHR and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights provided advice on the draft law for the establishment of the national human rights institution of Iceland.

37. In 2017, OHCHR provided advice on draft amendments to the enabling law of the Ombudsman of Kyrgyzstan and of Tajikistan, as well as to the law on the national preventive mechanism in Kazakhstan.

38. OHCHR and UNDP provided technical support to Turkmenistan with regard to the new law on the Ombudsman, which entered into force on 1 January 2017. On 11 May 2017, UNDP, OHCHR and OSCE supported the organization of a round table in Ashgabat to discuss the implementation of the law.

39. OHCHR also provided legislative and technical advice to the National Human Rights Centre of Uzbekistan.

Capacity-building

40. In April 2017, OHCHR supported a workshop on migration and counter-terrorism organized by the Ombudsman of Croatia.

41. In April 2017, OHCHR conducted training sessions on United Nations human rights mechanisms for the Ombudsman of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It also supported the translation and publication of the national preventive mechanism reports into English.

42. In Kazakhstan, OHCHR advocated for the strengthening of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, which led to constitutional amendments of its enabling law in March 2017. In February and March 2017, OHCHR organized two training sessions on standards for preventive visits for the newly appointed members of the national preventive mechanism. In May 2017, OHCHR supported the Ombudsman in launching the annual report on his activities.

43. In June 2017, OHCHR provided technical advice to the Ombudsman of Kyrgyzstan on the annual report of the Ombudsman for 2016. It also assisted the Ombudsman in creating a methodology to facilitate the collection and systematization of information coming from the regional offices.

44. In the Republic of Moldova, in November 2016 OHCHR, UNDP and the Ombudsman of the Republic of Moldova co-organized a workshop on the implementation of recommendations from the universal periodic review. In May 2017, OHCHR conducted a workshop on minority rights for representatives of the Ombudsman, the Equality Council and the Constitutional Court to discuss the recommendations formulated by the Special Rapporteur on minority issues following her mission to the country in June 2016.

45. In the Russian Federation, in February and March 2017 OHCHR facilitated the organization of a workshop for the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation and the regional Ombudsmen on international human rights mechanisms, promoting equality and combating discrimination, as well as a round table on developing an environment free from discrimination in football. OHCHR also developed a website providing information on the methods of work of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and on the practice of treaty bodies.

46. In Tajikistan, OHCHR provided support to the national preventive mechanism before and after its visits to detention premises. In November 2016, it organized a training session on reporting to the human rights treaty bodies.

47. In May 2017, OHCHR, together with the Parliament of Turkmenistan, OSCE, UNDP and UNICEF, organized a round-table discussion on international best practices and guiding principles for establishing the Office of the Ombudsman in Turkmenistan.

48. In January 2017, OHCHR provided advice to the United Kingdom Equality and Human Rights Commission on a human rights-based approach to disaggregation and data collection.

5. Middle East and North Africa

49. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for the Middle East and for North Africa, the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region, the OHCHR offices in Mauritania, Tunisia, Yemen and the State of Palestine and the human

rights components of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya continued to provide advice and assistance for the establishment and/or strengthening of national human rights institutions, in consultation with the OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

Legislative advice

50. OHCHR provided advice to the National Council for Human Rights of Egypt to amend its founding law in line with the Paris Principles. Legislative advice was also provided to the Oman Human Rights Commission, the National Institution for Human Rights of Bahrain and the National Commission on Human Rights of Mauritania.

Capacity-building

51. In March and April 2017, at the request of the National Institution for Human Rights of Bahrain, OHCHR, UNDP, the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the Oman Human Rights Commission conducted a capacity assessment of the Institution.

52. In Djibouti, OHCHR and UNDP conducted a scoping mission in March 2017, which led to the development of a programme implementation plan outlining strategic activities with a view to requesting accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.

53. OHCHR provided the Independent High Commission for Human Rights of Iraq with seven training sessions, as well as with technical and logistical support through the renovation and rehabilitation of its headquarters and regional offices. OHCHR also provided technical assistance for the process of selection of new Commissioners by receiving and filing the applications. It provided technical advice to the secretariat on how to maintain confidentiality, impartiality and transparency during the selection process.

54. In November 2016, OHCHR co-sponsored an event with the National Human Rights Council of Morocco on the role of national human rights institutions in addressing climate change, prior to the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

55. OHCHR continued to assist the Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine in monitoring the implementation of international human rights instruments to which the State of Palestine is a party. In November 2016, OHCHR organized a training session for the staff of the Commission on monitoring the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights. In May 2017, OHCHR, in cooperation with the Danish Institute for Human Rights, conducted two training sessions for the staff of the Commission on engagement with the United Nations treaty bodies and facilitated the participation of the institution in a session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. OHCHR also organized a workshop on using indicators and a human rights-based approach to data in the measurement and implementation of human rights obligations.

56. In Tunisia, OHCHR provided support to the High Committee for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms to organize a workshop, held in November 2016, to facilitate cooperation between the Committee and the Government. OHCHR provided technical advice by preparing the agenda, identifying relevant potential participants and facilitating a presentation on the practice of national human rights institutions in handling complaints and on the quasi-judicial functions of national human rights institutions. OHCHR prepared the final report of the workshop

containing a set of recommendations. In December 2016, OHCHR conducted a capacity assessment of the High Committee and, in February 2017, it organized a workshop on report writing for its staff.

B. Support to regional and subregional initiatives by national human rights institutions

1. Africa

57. During the period under review, OHCHR and the International Organization of la Francophonie convened a workshop which brought together the national human rights institutions of Madagascar, Kenya and Togo to exchange best practices.

2. Americas and the Caribbean

58. In December 2016 and April 2017, the OHCHR Regional Office for Central America and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees provided support to special sessions of the Central American Council of Human Rights Ombudsmen on the protection needs of migrants, displaced persons and human rights defenders in the region.

3. Europe and Central Asia

59. In November 2016, the OHCHR Regional Office for Central Asia and UNDP organized regional consultations in Istanbul, Turkey, for national human rights institutions of Central Asia, to build partnerships and foster peer-to-peer support and exchange of expertise.

60. In April 2017, OHCHR participated in a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions.

61. In April 2017, the national human rights institutions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan participated in a workshop organized by the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, to which OHCHR provided technical expertise.

4. Middle East and North Africa

62. In October 2016, OHCHR organized a capacity-building workshop in Muscat on monitoring hate speech for Arab national human rights institutions.

63. In Amman in December 2016, OHCHR and UNDP provided support for the organization of a workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals for Arab national human rights institutions.

C. Contributions to international initiatives supporting national human rights institutions

1. Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions

64. Article 6 of the statute of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions provides that its General Meetings, the meetings of its Bureau and of the Subcommittee on Accreditation and its International Conferences shall be held under the auspices of, and in cooperation with, OHCHR. Thus, OHCHR provided substantive support and secretariat services to the General Meeting of the Global Alliance in March 2017 and for its two Bureau meetings, in October 2016 and March 2017.

2. Subcommittee on Accreditation

65. OHCHR provides substantive support, technical advice and secretariat services to the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. During the period under review, the Subcommittee met twice, in November 2016 and March 2017, and reviewed 28 institutions leading to 23 re-accreditations, four new accreditations and one special review.

66. The Secretary-General has stated in his biannual reports to the Human Rights Council on the activities of the Global Alliance in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles (A/HRC/33/34, para. 31, and A/HRC/27/40, para. 26) that the presence of OHCHR at all the meetings of the Subcommittee was instrumental to attesting to the compliance of the accreditation process with the established rules of procedure and contributed to its transparency, fairness and rigour.

3. Fellowship programme for staff of national human rights institutions

67. OHCHR maintains its fellowship programme for the staff of "A" status national human rights institutions. Initiated in 2008, the programme is designed to provide fellows with information on and working experience with the international human rights system, as well as to familiarize them with the work of OHCHR in the promotion and protection of human rights. During the period under review, fellows from the human rights institutions of Afghanistan, Albania, India, Nigeria, Qatar, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania participated in the programme.

III. Support from the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to national human rights institutions

68. OHCHR, UNDP and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions entered into a strategic tri-partite partnership in 2011 to support national human rights institutions at the global, regional and national levels. In line with their mandate, each partner brings a specific expertise to the partnership in support of national human rights institutions around the world. In February 2017, the leadership of the three partners signed a letter of intent formalizing their commitment to enhancing their cooperation. In July 2017, during a tri-partite partnership review meeting, the partners continued to discuss areas of strategic priority and engagement, as well as the format of the process for the way forward in expanding their partnership.

69. In Africa, UNDP and the International Development Law Organization supported the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights to develop a manual on the human rights-based approach for policymakers at the county level. UNDP also supported the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone to inspect detention facilities to assess the conditions for detainees. In the Sudan, UNDP supported the development of an automated management system for people to lodge complaints online, which was launched in July 2017. From April to August 2017, UNDP, in partnership with OHCHR, supported the Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights to dispatch 84 human rights monitors to 28 counties to record human rights violations throughout the electoral cycle.

70. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNDP and the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions conducted three learning programmes for the national human rights institutions of the region on LGBTI rights, in December 2016 and in

February and June 2017. In April 2017, they organized a global conference on the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity with representatives of national human rights institutions and civil society. In November 2016 and June 2017, UNDP supported the participation of the national human rights institutions of Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia in conferences on business and human rights. In Nepal, UNDP facilitated cooperation between the National Human Rights Commission, the National Dalit Commission and the National Women Commission to implement the recommendations of the universal periodic review.

71. In Ukraine, UNDP supported the expansion of the Office of the Ombudsman to cover 24 regions of Ukraine.

72. In December 2016, in Istanbul, Turkey, UNDP, in partnership with the Global Alliance and regional networks of national human rights institutions, hosted a consultation for Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Arab States on the role of national human rights institutions in the promotion and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

IV. Cooperation between United Nations human rights mechanisms and national human rights institutions

73. In the period under review, national human rights institutions and their global and regional networks made important contributions to the international human rights system based on their experiences and good practices at the domestic level, especially with respect to the most marginalized and disempowered groups.

74. At the same time, many national human rights institutions helped to ensure that strategies and policies recommended by United Nations human rights mechanisms were implemented domestically. As independent bodies with the mandate to advise the authorities, they linked recommendations from the international human rights system to policymakers, especially governments and parliaments. In addition, many national human rights institutions also served as a bridge between the State and civil society, promoting the participation of all in the shaping of policies and implementation of recommendations from the international human rights system.

A. Human Rights Council

75. OHCHR, in coordination with the Global Alliance, continued to support the engagement of national human rights institutions with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.

76. In line with the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Council, which enable the participation of national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles, national human rights institutions delivered statements, submitted written documentation, participated in general debates, organized parallel events and interacted with the special procedures mandate holders under specific agenda items.

77. During the period under review, 19 written statements were submitted and 42 oral statements (including 11 video-recorded statements) were delivered by national human rights institutions and the Global Alliance (see annex I).

Universal periodic review

78. During the second cycle of the universal periodic review, the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles were among the most frequently made recommendations to Member States.

79. During the twenty-sixth meeting of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, in November 2016, five "A" status national human rights institutions submitted information for the report summarizing information from stakeholders, and nine such institutions submitted information for the summary report of information from stakeholders during the twenty-seventh meeting of the Working Group, in May 2017 (see annex II). One "B" status national human rights institution submitted input for the report containing information from stakeholders.

80. The majority of the 14 States reviewed at these meetings received recommendations to establish or strengthen the capacity of national human rights institutions to be fully compliant with the Paris Principles.

B. United Nations treaty bodies

81. OHCHR continued to support the participation of national human rights institutions in sessions of the United Nations treaty bodies. The secretariats of the treaty bodies, OHCHR and the Geneva representative of the Global Alliance liaised with national human rights institutions prior to each session to encourage them to provide written or oral information and/or to attend the sessions. The OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section also prepared briefing notes on national human rights institutions for the attention of treaty bodies and disseminated relevant recommendations and concluding observations to the concerned institutions.

82. During the reporting period, the treaty bodies reviewed 157 States parties, out of which 124 had national human rights institutions. Of those institutions, 117 interacted with treaty bodies by submitting reports, providing briefings before the review or attending the sessions (see annex III).

83. Treaty bodies have provided national human rights institutions with information notes, advice and tools to facilitate their effective engagement and have invited representatives of those institutions to their meetings.

84. In September 2016, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted guidelines on independent monitoring frameworks and their participation in the work of the Committee (CRPD/C/1/Rev.1, annex). The guidelines encouraged States parties to appoint national human rights institutions as monitoring frameworks and to equip them with additional and adequate budgetary and human resources to appropriately discharge their mandate.

85. In March 2017, OHCHR, in collaboration with the Global Alliance and the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, organized a consultation between representatives of the treaty bodies and national human rights institutions to consider a common treaty body approach to engagement with national human rights institutions. The key issues discussed during the consultation and the possible areas for further strengthening of the engagement between the treaty bodies and national human rights institutions were reviewed by the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies at their 29th meeting, in June 2017.

C. Other United Nations mechanisms and processes

86. In December 2016, the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing invited national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles (i.e. those with "A" status) to participate in its work, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. In July 2017, OHCHR facilitated the participation of eight "A" status national human rights institutions, the Global Alliance, the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions in the eighth session of the Open-Ended Working Group.

87. In March 2017, the Commission on the Status of Women encouraged the Secretariat to continue its consideration of how to enhance the participation of national human rights institution fully compliant with the Paris Principles, where they exist, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

88. In July 2017, the Global Alliance was invited to speak at a panel during the high-level political forum on sustainable development and hosted, jointly with OHCHR and UNDP, a side event on international human rights mechanisms and the role of national human rights institutions in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

89. In June 2017, national human rights institutions were accredited to the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Global Alliance made a statement at the Conference.

90. Accredited national human rights institutions with an "A" status were invited to participate in and contribute at all stages of the development of the global compact on migration, including at intergovernmental negotiations leading to the 2018 international conference.

V. Recommendations

A. Recommendations to Member States

91. **Member States are encouraged to establish national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles and to strengthen the structures and independence of existing institutions to enable the effective fulfilment of their mandate, taking into account the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and the advice of OHCHR.**

92. **Member States should ensure that national human rights institutions are provided with a broad mandate to protect and promote all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, and are granted adequate powers of investigation into allegations of human rights violations, including the competency to visit places of deprivation of liberty.**

93. **Member States should ensure that national human rights institutions are provided with adequate human and financial resources and the autonomy necessary to freely propose and manage their own budgets and recruit their own staff members.**

94. **Member States should ensure the formalization of a clear, transparent and participatory selection and appointment process for members and staff of national human rights institutions.**

95. **Members and staff of national human rights institutions should enjoy immunity while discharging their functions in good faith. Member States are encouraged to take the measures necessary to protect them against threats and harassment. Any cases of alleged reprisal or intimidation against members and staff of institutions, or against individuals who cooperate or seek to cooperate with them, should be promptly and thoroughly investigated and perpetrators should be brought to justice.**

96. **Member States should continue to provide financial contributions to OHCHR for the latter to sustain high-quality support for the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions and to provide secretariat support to the Global Alliance and its Subcommittee on Accreditation.**

B. Recommendations to national human rights institutions

97. **National human rights institutions should seek regular and constructive cooperation with relevant State bodies to promote the inclusion of human rights issues in legislation, policies and programmes.**

98. **National human rights institutions should develop, formalize and maintain cooperation with civil society organizations and should strengthen their capacity to participate meaningfully in the promotion and protection of human rights.**

99. **National human rights institutions are encouraged to participate in and contribute to deliberations in relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, in accordance with their respective mandates, including in the discussions on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

100. **National human rights institutions should take part in preventing and addressing cases of reprisals, and are encouraged to develop protective measures and mechanisms for human rights defenders and to disseminate information thereon.**

101. **National human rights institutions should continue to engage with international and regional human rights mechanisms and to promote the implementation of their recommendations.**

102. **National human rights institutions are encouraged to continue to advocate for their independent participation in relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, including the 2030 Agenda.**

Annex I

Submissions from national human rights institutions to the Human Rights Council (submitted between September 2016 and June 2017)

Country institution	*Segment*	*Date*
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 3 Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity	June 2017
National Institute for Human Rights of Chile	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the right to education	June 2017
Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of Azerbaijan	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the right to education	June 2017
National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons	June 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons	June 2017
National Commission on Human Rights of Mauritania	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights	June 2017
Equality and Human Rights Commission of Great Britain (also on behalf of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission)	Agenda item 3 Panel discussion on unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents and human rights	June 2017
Equality and Human Rights Commission of Great Britain (also on behalf of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission)	Agenda item 5 General debate	June 2017
Equality and Human Rights Commission of Great Britain	Agenda item 2 Panel discussion on unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents and human rights Video statement	June 2017
Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Video statement	June 2017

Country institution	*Segment*	*Date*
Independent National Commission on Human Rights of Burundi	Agenda item 4 Interactive dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi	June 2017
National Human Rights Commission of Mexico	Agenda item 5 Report of the Forum on Business and Human Rights Video statement	June 2017
National Human Rights Commission of Mexico	Agenda item 3 Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises	June 2017
National Commission for Human Rights of Greece	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants	June 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 6 General debate	June 2017
National Institute for Human Rights of Chile	Agenda item 8 General debate	June 2017
Network of African National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 10 Individual Expert on the situation of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire	June 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 10 Annual thematic discussion on technical cooperation	June 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	High-level panel on human rights mainstreaming	March 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	General segment	March 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 2 Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	March 2017
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders	March 2017
Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines	Agenda item 3 Biennial high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty	March 2017
Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines	Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child	March 2017
Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation	Agenda item 3 Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child	March 2017

Country institution	Segment	Date
Scottish Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child	March 2017
Scottish Human Rights Commission	Special Rapporteur on the right to food	March 2017
National Human Rights Council of Morocco	Agenda item 3 Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child	March 2017
Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders	March 2017
Office of the Counsel for Human Rights of Guatemala	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders	March 2017
Office of the Counsel for Human Rights of Guatemala	Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	March 2017
Office of the Counsel for Human Rights of Guatemala	Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights	March 2017
Office of the Counsel for Human Rights of Guatemala	Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities	March 2017
Office of the Counsel for Human Rights of Guatemala	Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence	March 2017
Office of the Counsel for Human Rights of Guatemala	Special Rapporteur on the right to food	March 2017
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence	March 2017
Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of Azerbaijan	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights	March 2017
Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of Azerbaijan	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict	March 2017
Danish Institute for Human Rights	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief	March 2017
Office of the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	March 2017

Country institution	Segment	Date
Independent National Commission on Human Rights of Burundi	Agenda item 4 Commission of Inquiry on Burundi	March 2017
Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine	Agenda item 7 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967	March 2017
Office of the Ombudsman of Colombia	Agenda item 2 Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	March 2017
Australian Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Annual debate on the rights of persons with disabilities Video statement	March 2017
Equality and Human Rights Commission of Great Britain	Agenda item 3 Annual debate on the rights of persons with disabilities Video statement	March 2017
Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 10 Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Video statement	March 2017
Commissioner for Human Rights of the Ukrainian Parliament	Agenda item 10 Interactive dialogue on Ukraine	March 2017
Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of Azerbaijan	Agenda item 3 High-level panel discussion on the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training	September 2016
Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of Azerbaijan	Report of the Working Group on the Right to Development	September 2016
National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Korea on behalf of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 3 Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons Video statement	September 2016
Office of the Ombudsman of Costa Rica	Agenda item 3 Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons	September 2016
National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Korea	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes	September 2016

Country institution	Assignment	Date
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 3 High-level panel discussion on the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training	September 2016
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 8 General debate Video statement	September 2016
Danish Institute for Human Rights	Agenda item 3 High-level panel discussion on the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training	September 2016
Australian Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Annual half-day discussion on the human rights of indigenous peoples Video statement	September 2016
Australian Human Rights Commission	Panel discussion on youth and human rights Video statement	September 2016
Human Rights Commission of New Zealand on behalf of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda items 3 and 5 Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Video statement	September 2016
Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation	Agenda item 3 Panel discussion on youth and human rights	September 2016
Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation	Agenda item 5 General debate	September 2016
Independent National Commission on Human Rights of Burundi	Agenda item 10 Enhanced interactive dialogue on Burundi	September 2016

Annex II

Engagement of national human rights institutions in the second and third cycles of the Universal Periodic Review (2016-2017)

Twenty-seventh session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2017)

State under review	Written contributions for report[a]	*Oral statement to Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned ("A" status national human rights institutions only)*[b]
Bahrain	Yes (B status)	..
Ecuador	Yes (A status)	..
Finland	Yes (A status)	..
India	Yes (A status)	..
Indonesia	Yes (A status)	..
Morocco	Yes (A status)	..
Netherlands	Yes (A status)	..
Philippines	Yes (A status)	..
South Africa	Yes (A status)	..
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Yes (A status)	..

Twenty-sixth session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2016)

State under review	Written contributions for report[a]	*Oral statement to Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned ("A" status national human rights institutions only)*
Haiti	Yes (A status)	No statement made
Timor-Leste	Yes (A status)	Agenda item 6 (thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council) Universal periodic review of Timor-Leste
Togo	Yes (A status)	Agenda item 6 (thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council) Universal periodic review of Togo
Uganda	Yes (A status)	Agenda item 6 (thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council) Universal periodic review of Uganda
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Yes (A status)[c]	No statement made
Zimbabwe		Agenda item 6 (thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council) Universal periodic review of Zimbabwe

[a] "Yes" appears only where institutions made written contributions.

[b] To be considered at the meeting of the Human Rights Council in September 2017.

[c] Subsequently changed to B status.

Annex III

Engagement of national human rights institutions in the work of the treaty bodies (September 2016-August 2017)

Committee	*Number of States parties reviewed*	*Number of States parties with a national human rights institution*	*Submission of information*	*Briefing*
Committee against Torture	18	16	9	9
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	20	12	6	4
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	18	14	10	6
Human Rights Committee	19	19	12	–
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	27	21	15	8
Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	7	5	3	2
Committee on the Rights of the Child	21	10	7	9
Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	22	21	9	6
Committee on Enforced Disappearances	5	6	2	–
Total	**157**	**124**	**73**	**44**